

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-19 Cancelled

20. (Previously presented) The spine binder according to Claim ~~[[12]]~~30, wherein the slot provides sufficient flexibility to the ring element that when the ring element pair is engaged, the ring element absorbs a stress that would otherwise disengage the ring element pair.

24. (Currently amended) The spine binder according to Claim ~~[[6]]~~30, wherein the male fastener has a side wall surrounding it which receives the female fastener.

25-26 Cancelled

27. (Currently amended) The spine binder according to Claim ~~[[1]]~~30 wherein each ring element further has an interior slot extending substantially more than half the length of said ring elements.

28-29 Cancelled

30. (Currently amended) A unitary injection molded polymeric spine binder comprising:

a spine consisting of a longitudinally extending connecting strip,

a series of spaced apart hinge members on said spine, each said member defining a hinge consisting of longitudinally extending portions arranged transverse to and spin joined together centrally of their width ~~[[by a web]]~~ along one common longitudinally edge of said spine, each said member having:

a ring arranged substantially transverse to said spine and adapted to define an elongated dorsal hinge comprising a first hinge brace and a second hinge brace connected by said spine, so that the hinge is open when the hinge braces are separated, and the hinge is closed when the hinge braces are brought together; and

a plurality of complementary male and female ring elements, wherein each ring element

is a semicircle and comprises a proximal end attached to a hinge brace and a distal end comprising a male fastener for a male ring element and a female fastener that is complementary to the male fastener for a female ring element, each ring element being attached to one hinge brace and a complementary ring element being attached to the opposing hinge brace, so that the distal ends of the complementary ring elements are separated when the hinge is open, and are engaged to form a loop in cooperation with the hinge when the hinge is closed,

each of said rings having a slot spaced apart from its ends, and

wherein said hinge members of said series are spaced apart along said spine a distance less than the circumference of said ring and are adapted to be pressed together into removably secured engagement when pressure is applied to said spine.

31. (Previously presented) The spine binder according to Claim 30, wherein the ring elements are wider than thick.

32. (Previously presented) The spine binder according to Claim 30, wherein each ring element has a slot and said slot on each ring element further comprises a closed interior slot within the walls of each said ring element.

33. (Previously presented) The spine binder recited in Claims 32 wherein said slot extends substantially more than half the length of said ring element..

34. (Previously presented) The spine binder according to Claim 30, wherein said female fastener has an open side for receiving the male fastener therein.

35. (Previously presented) The spine binder according to Claim 30, wherein the male and female ring elements are interspersed on both hinge braces.

36. (Previously presented) The spine binder recited in Claim 30, wherein all of said hinge member of said series may be closed together to form a loop upon manipulation of said spine.

37. (Previously presented) The spine binder received in Claim 35, wherein such pressure is applied to said spine from the direction of said fasteners.

38-40 Cancelled